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18 December 1950

MEMORANDUM FOR: THE ASSISTANT DIRECTOR FOR SPECIAL OPERATIONS

SUBJECT: Partido Socialista Obrero Espanol

Because the Partido Socialista Obrero Espanol (PSOE) has been greatly disrupted by internal dissension, and because of the fact that it must operate clandestinely and in exile, no clearly defined factional divisions can be established. Nor can it be stated that any one group is Communist-controlled. Certain Socialist leaders, generally associated with the minority "Negrin faction," have acted in concert with the Spanish Communist Party, more out of political expediency than conviction. Most of them have maintained their independence of action. For example, Negrin himself has been branded a traitor and pro-Franco by the Spanish Communist Party organ Mundo Obrero for his advocacy of Spain's participation in the ERP. Even Alvarez del Vayo, who has appeared to be particularly susceptible to Communist influence, has questioned the motives and methods of the Communist Party and the Cominform. Reports that have reached France of the severe treatment accorded by the USSR to Spanish Civil War refugees within its borders have made the rank and file of left-wing Socialists suspicious of the USSR, and in turn of the Spanish Communist Party. It can be expected that Tito will attempt to attract these Socialists, together with dissident Communists, into an international anti-Stalinist Marxist movement, and that he will have some success.

The Office of Research and Reports has no documentary information on the PSOE during the period 1936-1943. Attention is directed, however, to Chapters XIII and XIV of The Spanish Labyrinth by Gerald Brenan (published by The Macmillan Company, New York, 1944) which deals clearly and objectively with the question of Communist influence in the Republican Government and the PSOE during the Civil War period.

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THEODORE BABBITT
Assistant Director
Research and Reports

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